

SWC back on track, despite what you hear

Last year, rumors that the Southwest Conference was on the verge of breaking up were frequent.

However, since the new year, the conference has displayed remarkable strength, and despite the weakness of SWC football and basketball programs, those rumors are slowly beginning to fade.

College sports analysts across the nation thought a break up was only a matter of time after Arkansas left for a lucrative deal in the Southeastern Conference.

Then last year, it was reported that Texas A&M was going to the SEC and the University of Texas was bound for the Pacific 10 conference. There was even talk of the SWC merging with the Big Eight to create a viable television market pool. All of the rumors appeared valid despite denials from conference officials.

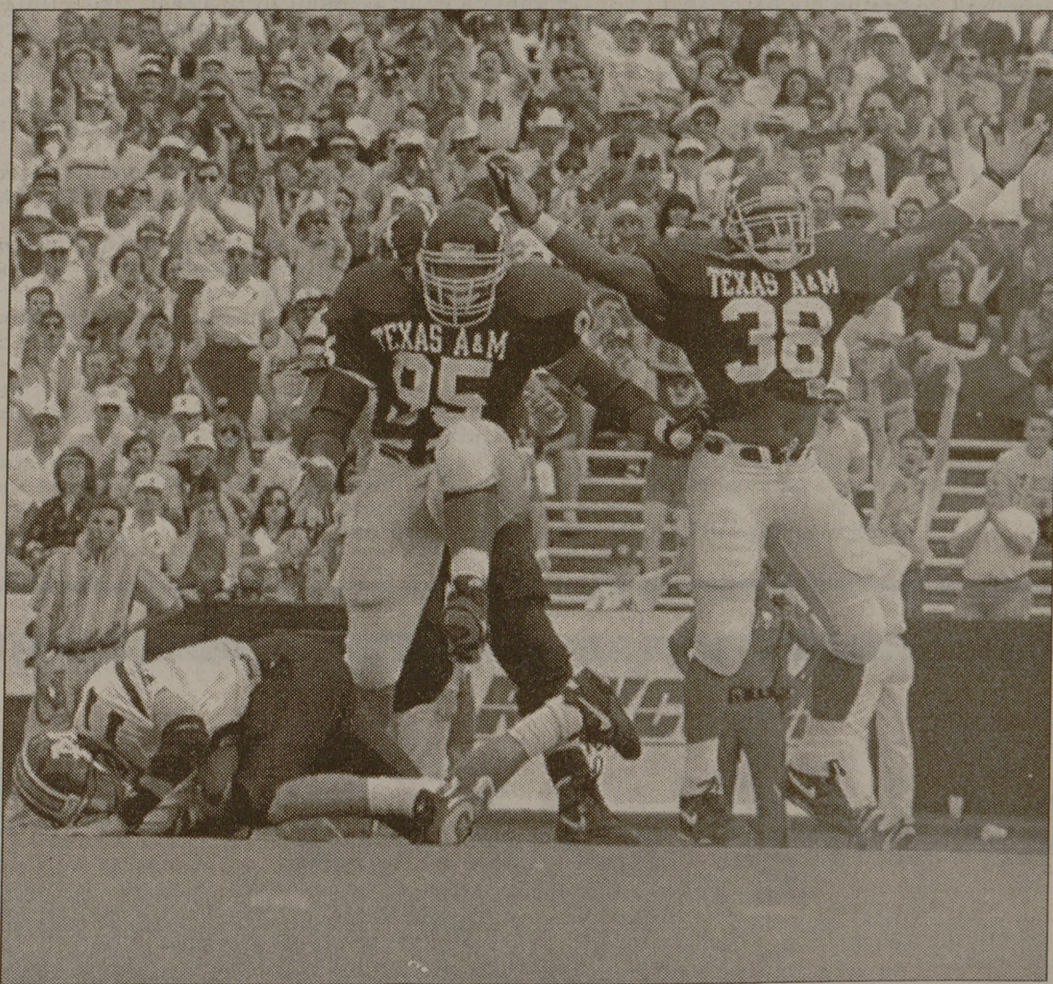
But the conference has remained intact regardless of the rumors. One



ROY L. CLAY
Sportswriter

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Defensive lineman Adams named Lombardi semi-finalist



Kyle Burnett/The BATTALION

Defensive lineman **Sam Adams** (95) and linebacker **Reggie Graham** (38) celebrate after forcing Missouri quarterback **Jeff Handy** (11) to his knees. Adams was listed as one of the twelve semi-finalists for the 1993 Lombardi Award for the best college lineman or linebacker.

By Julie Chelkowski

THE BATTALION

From the first time Texas A&M defensive end Sam Adams fired out from the line as a true freshman, coaches, critics and fans stood up and took notice.

It wasn't a shock, then, when Adams was selected as a 1993 Rotary Lombardi Award semi-finalist last Thursday.

"The day he walked on this campus, you could see that he had that kind of potential," defensive coordinator Bob Davie said. "I don't think anything would come as a surprise with (Adams)."

The Lombardi trophy is awarded annually to an offensive or defensive lineman who demonstrates exceptional ability on the field and best exemplifies the character of Vince Lombardi, the late head coach of the Green Bay Packers.

Adams said that he also was not surprised by the nomination.

"I was happy that they picked my name," Adams said. "It's something good for the University, so I was pleased."

Davie said Adams' physical qualities that contribute to his success as a lineman can be found in his agility, which was surprising to Davie at first. "He's got great explosion - unbelievable explosion," Davie said. "He just has remarkable quickness for a guy his size."

"The first night he came in here before we practiced, I saw him walk in and I said it's hard to imagine that kid could be a defensive player, he walks slow and (moves) slow. Then the first time I saw him come off and hit, I saw that explosion he had."

Head coach R.C. Slocum said Adams' relaxed style off the field could be a detriment to some players but he has the ability to swiftly change gears.

"I would characterize one of Sam's shortcomings in that he is a really laid-back, easy-going kind of guy - that's what he has to fight out there in terms of football," Slocum said.

"He has to step on the field and change personalities and be a high-intensity guy. He does a pretty good job of that."

Although Adams is a semi-finalist, Davie said Adams has some improvements to make before he is in a league worthy of receiving the 40-pound granite trophy.

"He has the knack for making the big time plays," he said. "Those things are what got him with that group of guys (semi-finalists), which I think is legitimate - he's one of those guys."

"But to win that award, he's got to take it to another level, and that's to get consistency."

Adams said his performance both on and off the field could stand some refining.

"I can improve in my quickness, reading (the plays) a little bit quicker or being in a little bit better shape," he said.

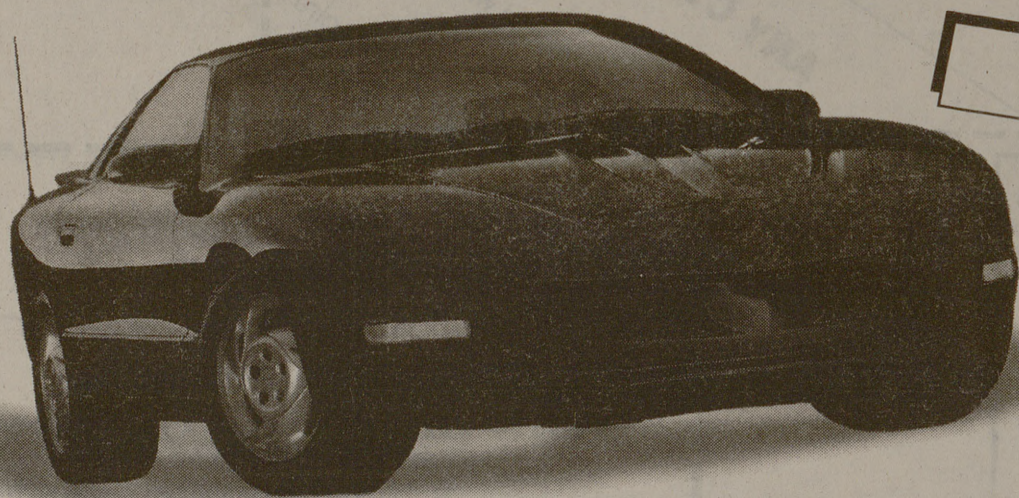
"I try to do the best I can in everything. I have a little a pie graph that I divide into sections and if I don't complete all the sections everyday, then I'm not improving myself as a whole."

Adams is the only nominee from the Southwest Conference, and if selected as the Lombardi Award recipient, he will be the only player from

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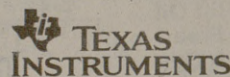
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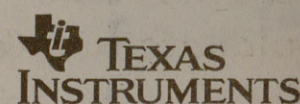
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